

Camden Opera House Committee
Minutes of Meeting
October 4, 2010

Present: Don White, Kerry Hadley (OH Manager) Bob Williams (guest) Stephanie Woodman, Dave Morrison (OH Tech Director) Susan Dorr, Deb Dodge (Selectboard Liaison) John Orlando, Hal Owen

Absent: Raymond Brunyanski

1. Call to Order: Chair Owen called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM in the Gentlemen's Club, 3rd Floor of the COH. Kerry called for nominations from the floor for the position of Chair and Owen announced that he would step aside as Chair but would gladly continue to serve on the committee. Nominations were then open and Susan D. nominated Don White for Chair, seconded by Stephanie W., passed unanimously. Chair White then asked for nominations for Vice Chair/Secretary and Susan D. put her name into consideration which was seconded and passed unanimously.

The committee expressed its tremendous appreciation for the leadership of Hal Owen and is grateful that Hal is willing to continue serving on the Opera House committee!

Don W. expressed his vision of creating more opportunities for the COH to be available for more community productions and functions. Hal O. suggested approaching the Belfast Maskers and offering them the opportunity to have additional performances of their Belfast productions in the COH.

2. Staff update/Financial, event summary: Kerry pointed out that the COH income met her projections of \$16,000 over what appeared on the budget. That extra revenue went into the operating fund for the town since some other revenue lines were down. COH revenues have increased every year. On COH productions rent is paid to the COH, Celtic Crossroads was a huge money maker that was scheduled at the last minute last winter. The upcoming event schedule is on target, no programming has been dropped. The Everyman Reparatory Theatre is a new group to use the COH - their production of the 39 Steps will make use of the loge boxes. The COH is booked through mid-December

Facility update: Dave M. New lights have been installed, state of the art with remote. COH still exploring all the things they can do with them! Very exciting. Wi-Fi is nearly completely installed throughout the COH, a Town/Pop Tech collaboration. Ben Cameron of Harbor Digital is doing the work. Other building projects underway include repairs to the gutters and the installation of street lighting on Washington St. Also completed were an inspection of all of the stage rigging which is on a regular rotation, and a structural study of the fire escapes on the building.

COH received a donation of genuine acoustical shells for use by a capella singing groups. The shells came from Bowdoin and will be at the COH from August till June when they go back to Bowdoin for a summer festival, then come back to the COH. The Down East Singers are holding their winter concert at the COH as a result of having the acoustical shells.

3. Economic development report: Kerry and Deb Dodge. Matthew Eddy, Camden's Economic Development coordinator convened a meeting which was attended by 80 people to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats to development in Camden. The

second part of the discussion will take place on October 6 @ 5:30 in the Knox Mill “church” space. A major component of Eddy’s vision is the growth potential of the COH and the Snow Bowl. He has great vision for the future use of the COH campus. We will invite him to attend a meeting of the OH committee to engage us in the SWOT process as we see it.

4. Ideas/planning: Kerry talked about an arts summit she attended at Haystack and handed out notes with the high points of that meeting. It has been 10 years since the COH had a strategic planning session. In this rapidly changing environment the standard is now a 3 year ‘framework’ to allow the organization to be nimble. Kerry did point out that nearly everything on the previous strategic plan has been achieved. It was suggested that Matt Eddy facilitate our strategic planning session. Don W. asked Kerry to come up with a Priority list for the next 3-5 years.

Public Involvement/Public Relations: Don W. suggested that we host a Business After Hours to show off all of the improvements and new systems that are available for hosting meetings and events at the COH. Kerry will contact the Chamber to see when the next available date is and the committee members all agreed to be available to participate in the event.

Concessions: Kerry would very much like to prioritize this, especially with an eye to serving alcohol at COH events, when appropriate. The municipality would apply for the permit. Jon O. expressed that as a for-profit producer he would want to see a formula for profit sharing since selling alcohol is a great revenue source at concerts. Questions were raised about types of events when alcohol would be appropriate and Dave M. brought up the staffing and administrative aspects of adding alcohol to the COH offerings. Kerry will meet with Roberta to discuss the approach. Kerry is also interested in just beginning to offer concessions at shows without necessarily including alcohol. Atty. Kelly suggested contacting the town’s insurance carrier to learn more (of course...)

Film Series: Don W. would like the COH to offer some family oriented films at low or no cost to get folks into the COH, now that we have such great sound and projection capacity. Discussion about the 5&10 location which is still being considered by the Future’s committee. Deb Dodge will contact some folks on that committee to find out the status of that discussion. Susan D. will contact John Enright who expressed interest during the CIFF of having more films in Camden, and Dana Rae Warren, an independent filmmaker in Searsmont who is very interested in more opportunities to screen work. Discussion regarding the creation of a committee to curate some films, possible contact with the Maine Media Workshops for possible screenings of works in progress.

Don W. would like us to consider producing some community talent shows. More about this later.

Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 15 at 5:00 in the Tucker Room.

Due to the lateness of the hour, discussion was ended and the meeting adjourned at 6:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Dorr, Vice Chair/Secretary